

Sharples A.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

ON THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE SESSION

OF THE

Medical Department of the Willamette University

FOR THE YEAR 1867.

BY A. SHARPLES, A. B., M. D.,
PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY.

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SALEM, OREGON:
PRINTED AT THE AMERICAN UNIONST BOOK AND JOB OFFICE
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INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN: Welcome! a hearty welcome; in the name of the Trustees, President and Faculty of the Willamette University do I bid you to these halls; and it is, I can assure you, with no small feelings of the weight of the great responsibility which rests upon us, that we have undertaken the delivery of a systematic and didactic course of lectures upon the subject of medicine.

Impelled, as I believe we all are, by a desire of cultivating our profession as a labor of love, rather than of gain—looking upon it, not as “a business, but as a great morality; not as a trade, but as a mission appointed by God for the benefit of the children of men;” and desirous of elevating the too low standard to which it has already unfortunately fallen in this State; and anxious to cement more closely the feelings of friendship and good fellowship, which already exists amongst all well educated and respectable practitioners of medicine and surgery; it is for these reasons, gentlemen, that we have undertaken to establish a school for the study of medical science. And, although we cannot at present offer to you the same opportunities, in the shape of clinics, anatomical preparations and experiments as you will find in our large eastern cities, yet if you will attend closely upon your lectures, you will obtain much information that is useful and practical, and will hear nothing, I hope and believe, but what sound sense and experience have tested and approved of.

In the study and practice of medicine, you will find that your reasoning powers are called largely into play. To reason from a peculiar train of symptoms back to the cause of them, is a thing that, in every case, you will be required to do, and you cannot too soon begin, if you have not already done so, to cultivate these faculties. And, in order to educate and use these reasoning powers to the best advantage, there are certain primary or elementary truths which you must learn as facts—some from absolute demonstrations made to you, others you will have to take upon the strength of the various authorities. And I cannot too strongly urge upon you the importance of storing your minds with these facts, properly arranged, in order that you may be able to recall them whenever and wherever you may have occasion for their use. To this end, gentlemen, let me ask each of you every night, before you retire to rest, to review the studies of the past day, not with your books, “but endeavor to recollect what has been engraven upon the tablets of your brain, and thus, by the efforts of recollection, deepen the lines traced there; and, as the faded inscriptions upon the ancient tombs were revived by the chisel of old Mortality, so render them ineffaceable.” As to the weight of authorities: Whilst on the one hand I would not yield a blind or abject submission, on the other do not indulge in vain or dogmatic skepticism.

The duties of a physician may be arranged under a few simple heads:

“1st—To avert preventable death.

“2d—To prevent avoidable suffering and injury from disease.

“3d—To diminish an irremediable suffering and injury.

“4th—To reduce to its minimum the agony of inevitable death.”

Your business here is to learn how to obtain these objects; ours, so far as we are able, to teach you. The question then arises, what means are we able to present to you for the

reaching of these ends ? and how far have they proved useful and reliable ? How are you to know when and where to use these appliances ? and with what degree of certainty can you look for a definite result ?—in other words, is medicine a science or a humbug ?

The laws established by the Omnipotent Being, as regards all matter, both organic and inorganic, are fixed and invariable, and every substance must, under given conditions, produce definite and uniform results. The reason why medicine is not yet among the exact sciences, lies in an imperfect manner of observation, and the causes of error lies not in physics but in physicians. But, gentlemen, we are constantly making advances in our means of investigation, and discoveries are made every day in appliances for the relief of disease.

I have read that, in the year 1816, an aged professor in the university of Pennsylvania, the oldest medical school in the United States, in giving his inaugural to his class, lamented that they had been born at so late a day ; for, had they come upon the stage of action a century before, he thought they could have all easily immortalized themselves by making discoveries, but he was of the opinion that it was then all done.

“The discoveries,” said he, “so illustrative of men of an earlier age have been made, and we can no longer pick up, as they did, the magnificent gems of the sciences as they open their rich and novel stores to the student of nature.” “Any one,” he observed, “might then have made an imperishable name, for novelties started into sight almost at every step, and the inquirer was overwhelmed with great things and mighty thoughts.” “We,” he remarked, “live in a period too late for grand discoveries, and must be content to glean where they reaped ; to gather, Lazarns-like, the crumbs from the rich table of philosophy—to set in order the splendid furniture, not to add to its quantity or its beauty.”

Could the worthy professor be now here and examine the wonderful improvements and inventions made since his day.

not in medicine only, but in all branches of science, he would undoubtedly give a different and more hopeful opinion.

Your able and learned instructor in chemistry will, under the head of imponderables, speak of and explain to you the electric telegraph, of comparatively modern discovery, by which the earth is now nearly surrounded as with a girdle, and by which at many thousands of miles distance we can, in an inappreciably short length of time, communicate with others. "At the distance of one thousand miles in the sixteenth part of a second may this great voice of nature be heard. Nine hundred and sixty thousand times faster than the swiftest racer or locomotive does it go. More rapidly than the earth revolves upon its axis, so that 'time is beaten by science.'" And of deep interest is this electric telegraph to us in this far distant land, away, as many of us are, from our birth place and our kindred, turning back to our father-land as our thoughts are sure to do, we recollect a kind parent, a devoted sister, an affectionate brother, or perhaps some one of a *dearer* tie; and is it not of inestimable value to them and to us that, although separated by many thousands of miles, we can be very quickly informed of their health or sickness, their prosperity or adversity, their weal or woe?

And the science of electricity as a therapeutic agent is as yet but in its infancy. That, gentlemen, is a subject to which I would direct your attention as a wide field and one as yet but partially explored, and worthy of your closest investigation.

Daguerre has since then prepared plates upon which the images of things are fixed and rendered permanent. This, too, gentlemen, contributes much to our happiness, for by it we are in a short space of time, and at no great cost of money, enabled to take inimitable copies of anything, either in nature or art.

Since 1816, Stevenson, the Englishman, invented the locomotive, with which, and its improvements made since his time,

we are able to travel at the rate of even sixty miles per hour.

Le Verrier, by a mathematical calculation based upon the unaccounted for movements of the then furthest known planet in our solar system, Uranus, discovered the planet which now so justly bears his name; truly, gentlemen, one of the most magnificent triumphs of mathematical reasoning which the world has ever produced.

Your profound Professor of the Practice of Medicine will tell you that it was in 1816 that Laennec, the celebrated French physician, first listened to the sounds of the heart and lungs, which to-day has been reduced to an exact science, dependent upon the laws of acoustics. And this branch of your profession be careful to cultivate with the greatest assiduity, for its importance cannot be over-estimated.

Your aged Professor of Obstetrics will show to you and explain the improvements made in his branch, which, as husbands, fathers, sons and brothers, are matters of more than ordinary interest to us all. He will undoubtedly teach you the great improvements made by Bennett, of London, which in the last few years have made a great change in this branch of our science, and his age and experience should well qualify him for the delicate task.

Your experienced teacher of Materia Medica will tell you of the extraction of quinine from the cinchona bark, of morphine from opium, and of the great anaesthetic agents, aether and chloroform.

Of the Laryngoscope and Ophthalmoscope will your competent and excellent Professor of Surgery discourse to you, together with many other inventions of an important nature and of recent date. Nowhere are the subjects of Microscopy and the Institutes of Medicine intrusted to better or more competent hands than to those of your eloquent and able teacher, himself no mean explorer in the field of nature, and he has already advanced far towards the solution of some of the most intricate problems of physiology.

The learned jurist, will explain to you the relations which you legally hold to the public, how far you are bound and for what you are not bound to answer to society. You will do well to listen attentively to and consider well what he may have to say to you, for in no institution in America is the chair more worthily or more ably filled, and he speaks as one with authority.

For my own part, I will endeavor, so far as I am able, to thoroughly instruct you in the branch which has been assigned to me, and not be deemed wholly unworthy of my associates.

And now, gentlemen, is it mere chance which has discovered these things, to wit: the electric telegraph, photography, the steam engine, the anaesthetic agents, consultation and permission, microscopy, the ophthalmoscope and laryngoscope? Surely no sensible man will pretend to say so. It is not chance or accident, but it is the result of close observation of facts, their careful collation and deep reasoning.

The paradoxical saying that "there are more false facts than false theories," is ascribed to Cullen; but, gentlemen, a fact is always true, and truth is eternal. But how to discern a fact, how to distinguish the real from the apparent, that is the difficulty. To the uninitiated traveller on our vast plains, the mirage holds out appearance of water near by; should he be deceived and follow expecting to find it he is surely lost, unless some means of relief be at hand, or he quickly retrace his steps. In this case should the apparent be mistaken for the real, and persistently acted upon, the error is fatal.

And of no less importance is it to you, gentlemen, to use equal diligence and care to discover the truth in diagnosing the maladies which afflict your patients. To do this you will have to use the greatest care in making your examinations; consider and reconsider carefully, and compare with your brother practitioners, whenever it is practicable, any observations you may make, particularly do this at the commencement of your career as practitioners. A certain symptom or

fact pointed out to you may appear very plain at the time, but when you come to investigate for yourselves it will not be so easily done as you may imagine. One of my earliest instructors, since chosen professor of the theory and practice of medicine in the University of Pennsylvania, (Dr. Stillé), was noted for the tediousness of his examination of cases, the great care with which he inquired into every minutia of his patient's symptoms, and he was also distinguished for the great reliability and accuracy of his diagnosis and prognosis of diseases.

Again, the greater accuracy you attain in these investigations the simpler and plainer will be your treatment of diseases, and the fewer articles of the *materia medica* will you use. Do not fall into the too common practice of using something from each of the great divisions of the *materia medica*, in the hopes that if one should miss some other will hit the mark. Let every case be a separate study to you: carefully note in your minds all the facts, surroundings and circumstances which, by any remote possibility, can have the slightest imaginable effect in the trouble with which your patient is affected, and from this make your decision as accurately as possible. "We know and feel that truth is somewhere, and for it we must indefatigably search. How shall we know when we have found it? We cannot always, or very often, wait for a positive demonstration, but we must be content to act upon a reasonable probability, and at this probability we arrive by a rigid and impartial inquiry into and estimate of facts, and a close and logical course of reasoning. Decide and act we must, and that, too, in very many cases, promptly; the river of doubt will flow forever if, like Horace's rustic, we wait for it to run by that we may pass over."

Thus, gentlemen, I have endeavored briefly to impress upon you the importance of a discriminating observation of facts, and a careful cultivation and use of your reasoning faculties,

both to your success in the practice of what is already known and for the addition of new matter to our science. We are apt to think that discoveries require an especial genius, but if we examine into the secret history of our greatest scientific attainments, we shall learn that patience, industry and attention have contributed more to the making of discoveries than any rare or peculiar qualifications, and as "*action, ACTION, ACTION* is the essence of oratory, so is *work, work, WORK* the soul of discovery."

It is a trite saying that "no man is a hero to his valet de chambre," but one from which we may learn a valuable lesson. The more intimately we become acquainted with great men the less do they seem to be, and the nearer the level of common men do they approach in our estimation. In promiscuous and immediate assemblies men can show only their talents, and not the untiring persevering and indomitable industry by which they have attained whatever of distinction belongs to them. And it is not alone in the study of your profession that you must work constantly, but also in the practice of it.

The great majority of men can enjoy their seasons of rest and holidays. The laborer can rest from his toil during the glare of the midday sun, the settlers on our vast prairies and in our forests can shelter themselves from the winter storms in the "hurtful days" of January, and smoke their pipes in quiet peace beside the cheerful fireside. On Sundays, when the world at large may bend the knee in the house of prayer, on Christmas and the other holidays the world may go a pleasureing. But not so with you, gentlemen. In the face of the winter storm and under the heat of the midday sun, on Christmas and on the holidays, on the day appointed by the executive throughout the land, you must work, ready and active, both in mind and body, instant in season, yes, and out of season; no slow or dilatory movement is admissible when he that is ready to perish calls upon you in his extremity. Remember—

"Leaves have their times to fall,
 And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
 And stars to rest; but all
 Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death."

And as the destroyer has all seasons for his own, so must you be at all times ready to go forth and give him battle. And what result of this constant work, both in the study and practice of medicine, may we confidently look for? Why advance improvement and a clearer and better knowledge of the investigation and treatment of disease.

"To give you the ideas of others, to open to you what has been found out in the past, is the object of institutions of learning; and we may not impose upon them the task of advancing any department of human knowledge. Such is not their function; that belongs to individuals generally unassisted, and often reviled and persecuted by learned bodies."

You will frequently hear the charge of vacillation laid against our profession, on the ground that our opinions and modes of treatment of disease have changed. Because we do not believe all that our forefathers did, and practice identical with them, it is said that medicine has no fixed laws; that our reason is but an hypothesis, and our practice but an experiment. But does not the very idea of progress imply that of change? Our science would be unworthy of its name if it knew no advancement.

Fixed laws do exist for its government in every respect, which conclusion we may fairly arrive at by an analogical course of reasoning; and it is no proof of their non-existence that we have not found them all out as yet.

The laws of galvanism have existed from the commencement of time, although it was but as yesterday that we discovered them. The blood flowed through vein, heart and artery in its quiet course, from the creation of the world; but until the time of Harvey, no man ever suspected the truth. And it was reserved for Sir Isaac Newton to point out the silent laws by which apples had fallen on men's heads for scores of

centuries. The truth is, that all departments of science are governed by fixed laws, ordained by the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and not of man's contriving, human power may discover them or may fail to do so, but their perfection and truth is nevertheless inchangeable and absolute.

Let us compare the practice of surgery of the present day with that of by-gone ages, and we shall find that there is now a much greater degree of simplicity, which has been the result of philosophical reasoning and intelligent pathological investigations. For example: Ambrose Pare, one of the best and greatest men who ever blessed the earth—may we all imitate him in his earnest desire for truth and for the relief of the suffering—tells us that, in his day, gunshot wounds were supposed to have something peculiarly poisonous in their nature, in consequence of the effect of powder, and for their cure it was deemed necessary “that they be cauterized with boiling oil applied on tents or setons.”

On one occasion, having a great number of wounded under his care, his oil became exhausted, and he says: “I was obliged to resort to an ointment composed of the yolk of eggs, oil of roses and turpentine. During the night I could not sleep at my ease, fearing that, in consequence of not having cauterized, I should find the wounded, on whom I had failed to apply the oil, dead—poisoned. This compelled me to rise early to visit them, when, beyond my hopes, I found those on whom I had put my digestive ointment, feeling but little pain, their wounds without swelling or inflammation, and that they had slept well during the night; whilst those on whom I had applied the oil were feverish and in great pain with swelling.”

He then speaks of a surgeon at Turin “who had a reputation above all others of well treating wounds from fire-arms; and I paid court to him for two years to draw his recipe from him, and finally, after many gifts and presents, he gave it—which was, to boil earth-worms and puppies, newly born, in oil of lilies, and afterwards to add some Venice turpentine.”

In the present day, cold water supplies the place of boiling oil, and a cerate of white wax and lard instead of the earth-worms and puppies. Ambrose Pare could not sleep at his ease, so great was his anxiety for his patients, and from this we may learn a valuable lesson.

Physicians, and particularly surgeons, have the reputation of being callous, cruel, cold-hearted and actually heedless of suffering. This, gentlemen, should never be. We are happily so constituted that we may, at times, nerve ourselves to resist the impressions of suffering; but a real pity and sympathy for the afflicted should exist in every case; and he who is wanting in these feelings, is lacking in one great incentive to labor in behalf of his patient.

It is related of the good old Dr. Wistar, one of the most prominent surgeons of his day, that, at a clinical lecture before his class, when a patient, on whom he was about to operate, was brought in, he said: "First know the anatomy, of the parts concerned in your operation, well, then cut boldly." He made his incision, and his patient shrieked with agony; and, as he raised his knife, a tear from the old man's eye washed away a drop of blood from its point.

"Cultivate the kindlier feelings of your nature, gentlemen. Let those gentle graces which are implanted within the breasts of every man be cherished and guarded in your intercourse with the world. Let no polluting touch come near them. Increase their brightness by constant exercise of thought and word and work of charity; and whilst thus you act for others, the blessings shall redound upon you, increased a thousand fold, and shall refine and purify your souls."

"He prayeth well who loveth well—
Both man and bird and beast.
He prayeth best who loveth best,
All things both great and small;
For the dear God, who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

And now as to some of the incentives which are offered you

to labor in your profession. Some are limited by our existence—others are eternal. Wealth, honor, fame and popularity, who shall deny all these, when properly sought for, to be legitimate and honorable results for desire. “Wealth—what is it? It is the ‘open sesame’ to the world’s treasures. By its possession we are enabled to enjoy all those comforts and luxuries of life which tend to make it desirable. By it the choicest gems of literature, science and the fine arts are placed at our command. With it we can relieve the distress of our fellow-beings. With it we can transport ourselves from one pleasant field of observation to another with rapidity and ease, all of which things are denied to one oppressed by the ‘res augusta domi.’ By it Christianity is spread all over the face of the habitable globe. Surely it is right and honorable to wish and strive for these things. To be honored and respected by the good and virtuous—to be loved by one’s neighbors for the intrinsic qualifications we may each of us possess—to have one’s integrity and veracity unblemished and spotless before the world; these, too, gentlemen, are things to be much desired, and their good results will be felt, not only on the man who possesses them, but will exalt the whole profession of which he is a member. And is it not a thought which may warm one’s blood, as it courses through his arteries and veins, that his may be of the immortal names born not to die? and that, through his deeds, those of his own blood may be embolded—that his countrymen may respect and honor him in life, and after death venerate his memory.”

I hold that all these—wealth, honor, fame and popularity—are desirable objects, and placed here by Him who has made us, as so many incentives to untiring exertion in the path of active usefulness. And yet, gentlemen, there is a stronger stimulus than all these needed, and one whose application may be universal. A man may fail in the pursuit of all these and lose heart, for every earthly

“Path

By many a cloud is darkened and unblest.
 And daily as we downward glide
 Life's ebbing stream on either side,
 Shows, on each turn, some mouldering hope or joy,
 And man seems following in the funeral of the boy.”

Or let the entire measure of earthly blessings be granted to any one to obtain, whilst they do add to the enjoyment of man, they are insufficient to satisfy the full craving of a spirit which, in this world, is but in the commencement of its being and their enjoyment is but transitory.

“ The glories of our birth and state
 Are shadows, not substantial things.
 There is no armor against fate—
 Death lays his icy hands on kings.
 All heads must come
 To the cold tomb.
 Only the actions of the just
 Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.”

One of the sacred writers tells us in a parable of the diligent use of a talent, and evidently regards faithfulness in business as a religious obligation, and in this we have the only universal incentive to action. It is one that holds out its inducements to every man alike, and “whose reward has no end.” The joys of time may shine brightly upon our pathway as we journey, may grow dim or may be extinguished as we advance in years, but their loss should make more brilliant the joys of the coming day, which hath no end and fadeth not.

We do not pass through life, gentlemen, unassisted or unaided. We have a still, small voice within us, a monitor which men call conscience. Let no man resist its warnings, but always lend a willing ear to its counsels. It is a messenger from God, a messenger of guidance and reproof, an angel by the way-side to check us in the time of error and to return us to the paths of virtue.

“ So when vice, to lure her slave,
 Woos him down the shining track,
 Spirit hands are stretched to save—
 Spirit voices warn him back.

Erring man to evil prone,
Though the paths seem pleasant, stay!
On the instant pause; there stands
An angel in the way."

And now, in conclusion, let me ask of you, are not all these worthy objects to work for, and should you not put forth every exertion of your minds and bodies to attain them? Think of how much benefit you may be to your fellow mortals, and now whilst you are in your student days, spare no pains to qualify yourselves to fill an honorable position in your profession; and just in proportion with the industry, perseverance and care which you manifest in your studies, will be your success in practice.

One word more and I have done. Your duties here for a few months will confine you to the lecture rooms, but not with absolute strictness. Your parents, guardians and friends believe that whilst absent from them you are ardently engaged in studying your profession, and for that purpose have consented to lose your assistance in the management of their domestic affairs and sent you to this, the capital of the State, and have exposed you to the temptations and vices which exist in all towns and cities to a greater or less extent; these pleasures ardent youth are, unfortunately, too prone to indulge in. In the confidence thus placed in you, every noble and generous mind must feel the strongest inducements to self-restraint. Every sentiment of honor must urge you to endeavor to fulfill their fondest expectations, and make you resolve never to inflict upon them the pangs of disappointment or disgrace. In the sacred names of father, mother, brother and sister, let me beg of you to avoid all doubtful society and haunts of vice which are open for you "like the gates of hell, night and day." Turn away, then, from all unhallowed pleasures, for they will surely bring upon you misery, remorse and disgrace. And when our course is ended, let us enjoy the proud satisfaction of restoring you to your friends with enlarged minds, elevated aspirations, pure reputation and unsullied honor.

WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY.

J. H. WYTHE, A. M., M. D., PRESIDENT.

DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

MEDICAL FACULTY.

H. CARPENTER, M. D., Professor of Civil and Military Surgery.
E. R. FISKE, A. M., M. D., Professor of Pathology and Practice of Medicine.
J. BOSWELL, M. D., Professor of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children.

J. H. WYTHE, A. M., M. D., Professor of Physiology, Hygiene, and Microscopy.

D. PEYTON, M. D., Professor of *Materia Medica* and Therapeutics.

J. W. McAFFEE, M. D., Professor of Chemistry and Toxicology.

A. SHARPLES, A. B., M. D., Professor of Descriptive and Surgical Anatomy.
M. B. LINGO, M. D., Demonstrator of Anatomy.

Hon. J. H. MITCHELL, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence.

The Trustees take pleasure in announcing to the Physicians and citizens of the Pacific coast that they have succeeded in making permanent arrangements for regularly organized Medical Lectures to be given in connection with the Willamette University.

The second session will commence on the 1st day of April 1868, and continue until the 25th day of July, 1868. Clinical instructions will be given twice a week. Operations performed in presence of the class. Material for dissection and anatomical demonstration will be provided, and all the necessary means to facilitate the study of Anatomy.

Requirements for Graduation are as follows: The candidate must be twenty-one years of age, and must present proper testimonials of a good moral character, and satisfactory evidence of having studied Medicine three years (Lectures included) with a reputable practitioner of Medicine. He must have attended two full courses of Lectures, the last of which must have been in the Medical Department of the Willamette University. He must pass a satisfactory examination in the presence of a committee appointed by the Trustees, and submit to the Faculty an acceptable thesis on some medical subject, in his own handwriting.

The fees for a full course of Lectures.....	\$100 00
Matriculation fee.....	5 00
Graduation	25 00
Demonstrator's ticket.....	10 00

Graduates from other Medical Colleges in good standing are required to matriculate only.

Good board may be obtained on terms more reasonable than in any other city on the Pacific coast.

Students, on arriving in the city, are requested to call on the Dean, who will see that they are provided with accommodations, and will give any other information that they may desire.

Letters addressed to the Dean, or any member of the Faculty, will receive prompt attention.

H. Carpenter, M. D.,

Dean of the Medical Faculty, Salem, Oregon.

TEXT BOOKS.—Students will find a good assortment of Medical Books in the city. It is recommended that they provide themselves with one or more Text Books in each of the departments. The following are recommended:

Anatomy—Gray, Wilson; Physiology—Dalton, Draper, Flint; *Materia Medica*—Stille, Beck, Wood, U. S. Dispensatory; *Medical Jurisprudence*—Beck, Whorter and Stille, Taylor; Chemistry—Johnston & Turner, Fowne, Silliman; Obstetrics—Hodge, Cazier, Bedford, Churchill; Practice of Medicine—Wood, Watson, Flint; Surgery—Gross, Erichson; *Surgical Anatomy*—Maclise.

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